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and
at least [one]two side [button]buttons located above
the thumb pinching area in a direction away from
the bottom surface.

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3. (Amended) The mouse of claim 1 wherein the at least [one]two
side [button is]buttons are shaped to substantially conform to a
space between a user's thumb and a user's index finger when the
user's thumb is positioned on the thumb pinching area and the
user's palm is in contact with the contact point.

5. (Amended) The mouse of claim 1 wherein a user's thumb avoids
contacting the at least [one]two side [button]buttons when the
user's thumb rests in the thumb pinching area.

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6. (Amended) The mouse of claim 1 wherein the at least [one]two
side [button comprises an outer surface]buttons comprise two
outer surfaces and the upper casing comprises an outer surface,
the outer [surface]surfaces of the at least [one]two side
[button]buttons being substantially level with the outer surface
of the upper casing at all points along a boundary between the at
least [one]two side [button]buttons and the casing.

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7. (Amended) A mouse for a computer system, the mouse
comprising:

a thumb gripping position located on a side of the
mouse;

a primary button positioned so as to be capable of
being actuated by a user's index finger when the
user's thumb is located on the thumb gripping
position; and

at least one side button positioned so that a gap
between the user's thumb and the user's index

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Cont

finger is reduced when the user's thumb is moved from the gripping position to actuate the side button while the user's index finger remains fixed on the primary button, wherein the thumb gripping position comprises a surface that is substantially level with a surface of the at least one side button along a boundary between the gripping position and the at least one side button wherein the thumb gripping position comprises a surface that is substantially level with a surface of the at least one side button along a boundary between the gripping position and the at least one side button.

14. (Amended) A mouse for a computer system, the mouse capable of conveying signals to the computer indicative of movement of the mouse across a working surface, the mouse comprising:

[an outer casing having a contact point for contacting a user's palm when the user manipulates the mouse;]

a metacarpophalangeal ridge support;

a secondary button [capable of being actuated by a user's middle finger when the user's palm is in contact with the contact point]; and

a ring finger and little finger convex support slope [being] that is separate from the secondary button, each surface point of the support slope having a normal that at least partially points away from the working surface[, the support slope positioned such that a user's ring finger contacts a first portion of the support slope when the user's palm is in contact with the contact point and the user's middle finger is in contact with the

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cont*

secondary button].

16. (Amended) The mouse of claim [15]14 wherein a space exists between the user's ring finger and the secondary button when the user's ring finger is positioned on the support slope such that the secondary button freely moves when actuated by the user's middle finger.

17. (Amended) The mouse of claim [15]14 wherein a portion of the user's little finger contacts both [the second portion of] the support slope and the working surface.

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18. (Amended) A mouse for a computer system the mouse comprising:

a ring finger distal phalanx contact area comprising at least one convex surface comprising surface points [point] having [a normal] normals that at least partially [points] point away from a working surface over which the mouse is moved[, a distal phalanx of the user's ring finger being positioned at the ring finger contact area when the user grips the mouse]; and

a little finger distal phalanx contact area comprising a convex surface having at least one surface point having a normal that at least partially points away from the working surface[, a distal phalanx of the user's little finger being positioned at the little finger contact area when the user grips the mouse].

25. (Amended) A mouse for a computer system comprising:

a bottom surface designed to face a working surface over which the mouse is moved;

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